

Vol. V.

[5]

Numb. 2

A

# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

---

Thursday, April 1. 1708.

---

**A**ND so the French are gone Home again, are they? And all the mighty Project is come to nothing.

Their numerous Fleet with seven thousand Men Went out to Sea, and SO came Home again.

After giving Thanks to Almighty GOD, whose Influence governs all the Affairs of the World, and whose Government is so much rejected by some, and deny'd by others, that it is out of Fashion to speak of it; there may be some very useful Observations made from it, which some People perhaps may think odd, but I must own I am of another Opinion.

I have always agreed with the general Notion, that standing Armies in Time of

Peate, are dangerous to the Liberties of the Country they are maintain'd in, and I allow a great Deal more of the many Lengths hasty People have run into on that Head; but as to those People who were for no Regular Forces at all, and leaving us quite naked to the Insults of our Enemies, that were for having our *Militia* be our Defence, and neither Generals, Fortifications, nor Regular Troops, they may now come and learn a new Lesson.

1. That SOME FORCE— is as necessary to secure a Kingdoms Property, as too much is dangerous to its Liberty.

I know,

I know, I am upon a dangerous Precipice in this Argument, and have a Crowd of pretended Patriots ready to push me head-long down, that I might dash upon the Rocks of Tyranny and absolute Government; and it is much if I do not raise a Mobb upon me, as if I were writing for Stationary Legions in the Hands of the Prince, as a Rod of Iron to rule the Nation by.

But to let these malicious People know, they will be disappointed in their Expectation, I must make a previous Declaration of my true and genuine Design or Meaning in the Word **SOME FORCE**.

This I have formerly explain'd to be meant by me thus,

1. *Such a Force and no more*, as the People of England represented in free Parliament shall agree to be necessary, and consent to be kept up.
2. Such Force and no more, as shall always be entirely subjected to Parliamentary Authority, as to their Disposition and Continuance.

To tell us, such a Force so subjected shall in Time subdue the Parliament, reduce their Masters, and enslave the Kingdom, I think, will admit of these Reasonings by Way of Reply.

1. It cannot be probable, that a Force so small, and so dispers'd for necessary Defence, as this must be, can endanger us; and it has not been instanc'd in any Age in the World.
2. While the Prince submits the Number and Continuance of them to Parliamentary Regulation, in which the following two Things are establish'd—  
1. That they are paid by Money given but from Year to Year. 2 That it is High-Treason for them to continue longer in Arms than one Year, unless renew'd by Parliament, it seems impossible.
3. Tho' it had some Possibility of Danger in it, yet if it be prov'd to be necessary, that Risque must be run.

I wave the Weakness of their Arguments, who are for having the *Militia* being thought able to secure us against all the World, and yet will have 10000 Men of Standing Troops be able to enslave us—These Things may hereafter come to be debated more largely, but the present Matter arises from hence.

You see, Gentlemen, what a Hurry and a Fright the Invasion of *Scotland* has put us all into, by a most contemptible Body of 5 to 7000 Men— And, pray, what is it owing to?

I pretend to tell you, it is owing to two Things.

1. The Nakedness of *Scotland* with Respect to its own Defence.
2. The Division and Disaffection of the People.

And to make this more plain, I'll give you a Letter written me from a Person of Honour in that Country, which perhaps may give a brief Sketch of this Matter; the Person, I assure you, is perfectly in the Interest of the Government, and a Lover of Liberty, and in his Letter you may find some true Notions, and perhaps the best of the State of that Country, of any has been yet seen, both with Respect to the Defence of the Nation, and the Case of the Abjuration-Oath, which makes so much Noise among us.

S I R,

*Funerkeisbing, March 11. 1708.*  
 " I Had wrote to you sooner, but  
 " that I had little to tell you, excepting that I went from Edinburgh  
 " some Days after you went for England, and have found it necessary to  
 " carry Arms ever since for my Personal Defence; for we have now no  
 " Government, and the Murtherer,  
 " you know of, rambles, threatens,  
 " commits Rapes, &c. as he pleases,  
 " and

" and was lately at Edinburgh, in the Face of Authority, without being molested. But I have heard about ten Days agone of a Descent from France, probably design'd on Scotland, and should be glad to hear that England was taking suitable Measures to put us in Condition, to give the French such Reception as they deserve; you know as well as any Man the Circumstances of Scotland, and I apprehend you may readily grant, that 5000 good Troops might pass from one End of Scotland to the other without much Opposition, as Matters now stand; tho' I think the French infatuate, supposing they can make our Firth, if they do not land at Oramond, where they may go on t hSands at low Water in Order of Battle, and may with little Opposition take Edinburgh, where they will find a Million of Money coin'd, or in Bullion and Plate. We have scarce 3000 Regular Troops, and no Militia. The common People beyond Tay have no Principle, excepting a few, but to obey their Superiors and Landlords, who are generally Jacobites; so that no Good can be expected from them. I should think it advisable, that a Militia of 40000 or 50000 Men of those, who are known to be well affected to Her Majesty, and of Revolution Principles, were establish'd on this Side Tay, and which, if you in the South are not too diffident to trust your Friends, might be done; that some Officers of known Integrity were appointed to learn them their Exercises, which might be done with their own Arms;

" that there were Magazines of good and regular Arms with Ammunition to be given them, in case there was an Invasion, and that they were commanded by an English General, who, if he were of good Morals, would be more acceptable than a Scotsman; for our People are dissatisfy'd with our own Nobility, because of the Union, tho' the Presbyterians are for keeping it since it is made. I see no Inconvenience in this Project, if it be not that your High-Church will cry out against arming the Scots-Presbyterians, but they are in no Hazard; for there is not, so far as I know, one sober Presbyterian in Scotland, who has the least Thought of Reforming the Church of England by Force,

" As to the Oath of Abjuration, I reckon it the Interest of the Government not to impose it on Scotland, even tho' it was amended as to the Limitation Clause; for it will certainly divide our Church, many of us scruple to swear the Oath of Allegiance to her Majesty a second Time, as being unnecessary; for the World knows our entire Loyalty, and we judge it a Grievance, that with us such as have taken that Oath must take it again in every new Capacity. Again, the Presbyterians in Scotland keep their Oaths very Religiously. Now the Parliament keeps it in their own Power to alter the Succession, but if they swear us to it, we will account our selves obliged to maintain it, tho' they should change it, if the Reasons of the Change do not satisfie our Consciences; so that " by